

(Demo) Civilian Conservation Corps



FWSCCC-0056

STATION LIBRARY

Mallheur Refuge

NARRATIVE REPORT

September 1936

Camp Buena Vista
Oregon

Published by the supervisory
and facilitating Personnel

Editor in Chief,

James Green

Assistant Editor,

Paul Atkins

CAMP PERSONNEL

TECHNICAL STAFF

(Refuge)

Stanley Jewett
Refuge Supt.

John C. Scharff
Asst. Refuge Supt.

Wilfred J. Gregson
Associate Architectural Eng.

Arthur Page
Project Engineer

(Central Office)

Fred Anderson
Sec. to Jewett & Jr. Clerk

Shalor Eldridge
Jr. Clerk

Zeno Dent
Jr. Clerk

Buckland Keen
Under Clerk

(Camp)

James Green
Camp Supt.

J. D. Sanders
Carpenter Foreman

Oscar Nelson
Junior Foreman

M. V. Nichols
Junior Foreman

W. L. Carden
Squad Foreman

Chas. Clark
Asst. to Technician

Geo. Wilson
Mechanic

Patrick Donegan
Blacksmith

Stanley Lechowicz
Shovel Operator

(Army)

Capt. Cyrus M. Lane
Commanding Officer

Lt. Gullikson
Mess Officer

Lt. Ralph Rosenberg
Medical Officer

George C. Space
Educational Advisor

CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY WILFRED J. GREGSON CONCERNING THE NARRATIVE
REPORT, CAMP BUENA VISTA

September 1936

Reference is made to Mr. Pederson's letter of September twenty third acknowledging receipt of July and August narrative reports. There is an impression at the Malheur Refuge that "a fairly good job" is an understatement. Compared with Mr. Jewett's "the best d----- narrative report from this refuge", it would seem a little explanation would help.

We all know what we think of Enrollees, although some have different ideas; to know what an Enrollee thinks of us is like the man biting the dog, -----News! That is just what happened when Enrollee Aikins rose over night to become Editor of the Narrative Report. For July he typed up the reports of the foremen et al - correcting spelling and mistaken English in all but the report of the Educational Advisor.

The August Narrative Report was his supreme effort, and we at this end congratulate Enrollee Aikins, and await his recognition from Official sources. We, of course, could have censored this report here, but having a sense of humour, we were delighted at reading of the - "floor joists being securely nailed to the walls and beam".

In a separate letter is detail of this item of construction as requested, and reasons for same.

The current report is well worth the time of any wall bound Washington official's time in reading. It smacks of the Western Plains, Malheur the Great High Desert. Especially interesting is the chapter on Recreation. Enrollee Aikins describes with an easy grace how the equation - bulls minus two - become steers.

The sill pieces described under Quarrying were used in the Sod House type "C" Residence, for window sills. They were quarried and tooled in one piece for each opening and represent the highest degree of skill obtained by enrollees on this work, and in fact the work of master craftsmen. The longest piece was cut 8' - 0" x 10" x 4" with eight point top surface and rough cut face. These boys have now left for Chicago. All of them came to us raw and unskilled and the bright ones have gone into the world again, armed with a skilled trade to face life's battles and win out.

We members of the Biological Survey are born of tireless stock, nothing satisfies but the best. We grind and fuss and fume to the end that our camps will be outstanding among camps, our enrollees, the highest skilled regardless of how they enjoy the process of learning. By nature of the Survey's work we are all sportsmen at heart, and slowly we instill that spirit into that portion of Young America that finds its varied way into our camps. It makes for good fellowship and good conservationists; the World and the Biological Survey need Both.

CAMP BUENA VISTA BP-3

OREGON

RESIDENCE BUILDING

September 1936

The Buena Vista residence building speedily took on size and form during September and now exhibits an architectural beauty which is not entirely concealed by the wooden forms and surrounding construction materials obstructing the view.

The laying up of the superstructure walls of natural faced lava stone was one important item close to completion at the close of September. Two skilled workmen were employed at this work and were assisted in handling the stone by enrollees.

The roof of the residence building is complete except for the shingling and consists of shiplap sheathing covered with one layer of tar paper, with laths to tack the shingles to, nailed on over the tar paper.

The rooms of the upper structure of the residence are now partitioned off and enrollees have been busy during the month in tacking up laths prior to the plastering of the walls, and work has commenced on the fire place. The window work is complete except for the installation of glass. Metal lath for plaster has been put in the bathroom in place of wood lath. A bath tub and some of the plumbing and wiring are in.

Building the residence is ably directed by foreman J. D. Sanders with an average crew of fourteen enrollees who are interested in learning the building trades.

Sand hauled from P ranch was screened for concrete on the walls and stone work. The Jaeger mixer was used a total of sixty-five hours during September.

RESIDENCE BUILDING

Screening Sand



Mixing concrete, lava stock pile in background



Laying up rock for the front porch



The two stone masons were assisted by enrollees who carried lava stone to where the stone was needed.



Work on the roof & on the rear stone wall



View of residence from rimrock. Stock pile
in background



In moving large lava slabs during building of the wall a roller was put under the rocks & the rocks were rolled along a wood plank track from the stock pile of lava.



The roughness of the outer wall is apparent here



Removal of some of the staging permits a better view



Shooting from another angle. Autumn leaves in foreground.



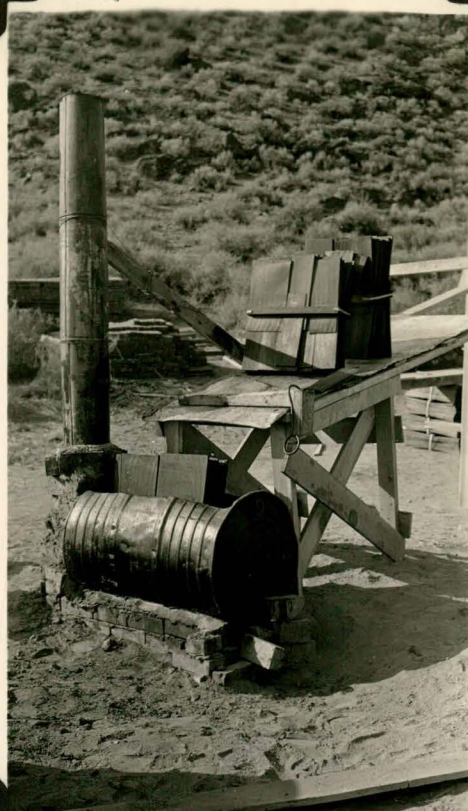


Blasting on the hillside

First picture below-- effect
of the blast.

Second picture below - Crew
digging out after the blast a
place for the residence water
storage tank.





Arrangement used
for steeping shin-
gles in linseed
oil.

End of the Residence Building



CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

QUARRYING

September 1936

Foreman Frank Wiseman and the rock crew have been engaged at shaping stone with chisels and hammers during the larger part of September. During the early part of the month trucks were loaded with rubble rock and sent to the Headquarters site at Sod House. Several loads of cut rock were sent to Sod House early in the month including one eight foot four inch sill which was shaped and cut by one of the experienced rock crew enrollee workmen.

During the latter part of September Wiseman's rock crew has gone to Sod House each day where they were employed at building a stone structure to house the water pump. Foreman Wiseman is unfortunate in that several of the enrollees whom he had trained for stone work during the past year will not be with him after the expected movement of company sixteen twentysix to their own corps area.

In the early part of September four loads of cut rock and twenty loads of rubble rock were loaded and sent to Sodhouse. This crew averaged six in number throughout September.

CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

FENCING

September 1936

Approximately two and one half miles of refuge boundary fence was completed on the west side of the Blitzen valley from a point south of the Grain Camp southward to the Wetzel ranch during September.

Besides the usual work of clearing right of way, digging holes, setting posts, stringing wire and putting in corner braces and stays, a number of rock jacks became necessary for a distance over a rocky point where the crew were unable to dig post holes.

Fence building progressed in a satisfactory manner this month under the direction of enrollee leader Steve Pickut with a crew averaging twenty-four in number.

Fence Post hole digging

Supt. Green & enrollee Leader Piekut in conference



Constructing rock jacks over a rocky point



Nailing up a rock jack form



A type of brace used in fence construction



CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

TRUCK TRAILS

September 1936

At the start of gravel pit operations for September we had seven dump trucks loading at our gravel pit. By September eleven, four of these trucks had been requested and turned over to Sod House for the purpose of filling in about the headquarters buildings. One more truck was requested on September twenty third.

Road graveling and bunker operations were suspended at the end of the second week in September because of lack of enough trucks to keep the gravel bunker crew busy. Graveling was under the direction of foreman Bill Carden.

Five hundred thirty six truck loads of gravel were used in maintenance work and in graveling on Rockford Lane.

Foreman M. V. Nichols and the caterpillar crew spent seven days this month in grading Rockford Lane, while eight thousand eight hundred cubic yards of fills were made in construction of the Center Patrol road. One hundred and fourteen man days were expended under the direction of foreman Nichols, in grading and road construction.

Foreman M.V. Nickols making a fill during construction
of the Center Patrol road.



Section of completed Rockford Lane



CAMP BUENA VISTA BE-5

OREGON

SURVEYING

September 1936

September surveying consisted mostly of running grade levels and determining location for the new Center Patrol road and its river bridges, and in surveying lineally for the Malheur boundary fence location north of Sod House.

Lineal, grade, and topographical surveying on the Malheur refuge is done by Surveyor Charles Clark. During September his enrollee crew averaged three members. Mr. Clark's crew have had considerable experience at surveying during their stay in this camp and this experience has materially increased the efficiency of the surveying crew by making accurate survey possible in a minimum of time.

Miscellaneous activities of the surveying crew this month include two days spent at Sod House where Surveyor Clark assisted Architect Smith with the landscaping work in the area of the headquarters buildings. Two days were spent at grubbing willows on the P ranch in order to determine locations. The amount of dirt excavated from Buena Vista lateral ditch by the dragline during the month was measured and computed.

Fifty miles of location, grade and preliminary line was surveyed during September while twenty two miles of lineal survey and preliminary lines were run. Man days expended numbered ninety four.

CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

BRIDGES

September 1936

During September one bridge was completed on Rockford Lane across the Blitzen River and work was begun on a bridge crossing for the Center Patrol road now under construction.

The Rockford Lane bridge will be used by traffic on both the Center Patrol road and the Rockford Lane valley crossing, as the Center Patrol road intersects Rockford Lane east of the river and the two roads run a common course for a short distance. This common road crosses the new bridge, where the roads diverge, Rockford Lane continuing in a straight line across the valley, while the Center Patrol road runs in a northerly direction.

The pile driver was assembled at the beginning of September to drive piling for the Rockford Lane bridge.

The hammer cable is unhooked from the hammer and attached to the end of a pile. A truck on the other cable end supplies power to draw the pile into position for driving. The cable is then loosed from the pile- which is kept from toppling over with a rope - and hooked to the hammer which is drawn up by the truck into position for tripping.

734037

The pile driver was moved from the completed Rockford Lane bridge to the Center Patrol bridge site by towing the pile driver behind a caterpillar tractor.

Operation of the pile driver and all of the bridge work was performed by foreman Oscar Nelson with a crew averaging eight members. Rock abutments were laid up for the Rockford bridge and surmounted by twelve by twelve mud sills. The spikes used in nailing the capping on the bridge were driven with small sledge hammers. The bridge timbers were coated with a preserving paint called Pabco. A broom was used for this work.

Foreman Nelson and his crew are engaged at present in driving piling for a Center Patrol road bridge.

734037

ROCKFORD BRIDGE

734037

View showing some of middle stringers during
bridge construction



Placing mud sill in position



Leveling mud sill. Supt. Green standing at right



CAMP BUENA VISTA BP-3

OREGON

DITCH EXCAVATION

September 1936

The Buena Vista lateral ditch with its source in the Blitzen at the Grain Camp Dam two miles south of Buena Vista, was this month completed northward to Diamond Lane, where a number of culverts are established. The culverts in Diamond Lane are to be supplied with headgate attachments. With Diamond Lane valley crossing acting as a levee, water can be backed up in part of the valley area south of the Lane by use of these culvert headgate attachments.

Below the Lane the water permitted by the Buena Vista Lateral can be used to flood the east Buena Vista area.

The dragline used to excavate the Buena Vista lateral ditch was operated by Stanley Lechowicz assisted by enrollee helper Jones.

Dirt excavated from Buena Vista Lateral ditch during September is estimated at eighteen hundred cubic yards.

Driving Spikes



Enrollee in water boring hole for bolt to bolt cross brace to pile.



Bridge practically complete



Caterpillar tractor towing pile driver from Rock-
ford Lane bridge site to Center Patrol bridge site.
The newly constructed bridge at Rockford Lane Had just
been completed when this picture was taken.



Refueling dragline at Buena Vista Lateral Ditch





Two views in which a small section
of Buena Vista Lateral is shown





Getting a reverse slant
on dragline operating

Dragline operating on Buena Vista Lateral



CAMP BUENA VISTA BE-3

OREGON

TRANSPORTATION

September 1936

Two hundred eighty man days were used in transportation of materials during September. The bulk of the hauling consisted of building stone and rubble rock hauled twenty miles from our quarry to Sod House, and lumber and fence posts hauled forty four miles, from Burns to Buena Vista. Miscellaneous materials brought the month's tonnage to a total of nearly four hundred tons. Sixteen tons of tower steel were hauled from Burns to Sod House, a distance of thirty six miles.

Unloading lumber at Buena Vista stock pile



CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

REFUGE SIGNS

September 1936

During the third week of September twenty three miles of boundary fence were posted with refuge signs by foreman Bill Carden and a crew of four enrollees.

These signs were placed a quarter mile apart and are of two types, the first a flying goose refuge sign and the second, a sign warning against trespassing.

An unusual incident occurred in which a local rancher went temporarily insane and threatened to shoot some of his neighbors and relatives. As a common fence separated his ranch from the Refuge, along which signs were posted, the man is rumored to have included the sign posters among his imaginary enemies. However, the county Sheriff soon arrived and escorted the man to Burns for further observation.

Two types of boundary posters along Malheur Refuge fence



CAMP BUENA VISTA BE-3

OREGON

LAKE AND POND DEVELOPMENT

September 1936

September levee work amounted to twelve thousand two hundred cubic yards of dirt moved in levee construction throughout the month with the use of one and part time both the Rd-7 bulldozer and the RD-7 angle-dozzer. Prior to the use of the bulldozer in shoving dirt up in levee form, the ripper, towed by the tractor, ripped up the sod and loosened the surface of the ground where hard, in order that the work of the bull-dozzer could be more easily performed.

The water side of the levees are given a five to one slope in order to reduce the eroding action of the waves against the levees.

In the building of levees, existing low places suitable for lake and pond formation are determined by survey methods. The desired water depth in these low places decides the height of the levee to be constructed. Surveyor Clark runs levels and sets stakes on which is marked the number of feet height wanted in the levee. Mr. Nichols and the cat crew then build the levee and give the proper slope to the levee banks.

Most of the levees under construction the past two months lie east and north of Buena Vista. The canals constructed south of Buena Vista, the Buena Vista ditch and the Buena Vista Lateral, are expected to divert water into a number of the before mentioned low places where a system of levees will produce lakes and ponds of varied depths. Water control structures at the canal sources and in the canals will control the amount of water in the area of the levees. A large number of knolls scattered throughout this area to be flooded, will afford protection to birds against predatory animals during the nesting season. These knolls are overgrown with natural cover of bluejoint and giant rye grasses.

A double shift of caterpillar tractor operators have been used in levee and truck trail construction during September. The first crew worked from five in the morning until noon, while the second crew worked from noon until seven P. M.

Levee construction in East Buena Vista area



A pond at low water showing levee in background



CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

CAMP CONSTRUCTION

September 1936

The Buena Vista sewer system had consistently failed to function properly due perhaps to the "lay of the land" plus faulty engineering when the system was first installed by the army, a year ago.

Under army direction a complete new sewer system was built with most of the work complete at the end of September. The new system provides more fall to the sewage line, which is shorter and follows a more direct route than the old line did. Larger and deeper septic and settling tanks were built. In the digging of the septic and settling tanks, several hard layers of dirt threatened to slow up the digging, but these layers were loosened by blasting, which was done by foreman Wiseman of the rock quarry.

Aside from week days, the Army found this work to fit in conveniently with a week end penalty system whereby enrollees who are found to be lax in some respect are required to work overtime in ratio to the number of times their laxity has become apparent to the Army in any one week.

CAMP BUENA VISTA BE-3

OREGON

SEPTEMBER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

September 1936

For the month of September we arranged our program for the benefit of the various individuals of the camp. We started the month with twenty one different courses. Courses were so outlined to fit the desires of the different individuals of this Company. When a group of enrollees want a certain course we immediately make plans for that course and try and get a teacher to teach the course. With the large overhead that is in this camp we generally get some one to teach the course. Because there were rumors that the company was going to disband and because orders later did come to disband, the morale of the students was somewhat broken so that at the end of the month we had a few less classes and fewer students than at the beginning of the month, however we yet had eighteen classes going. All twenty one classes have been discussed in other monthly articles so we feel that it is unnecessary to list them now.

Agreements were made this month with the County Superintendent of Harney County to allow certain classes to be taught in Camp so that enrollees who have not finished the eighth grade might do so. One student started his work immediately and we are sure others would have soon started if the camp would have remained here this winter.

Agreements were also made with the Principal of the Burns High School so that the students who were qualified and who had the desire could increase their high school credits. Seven students sent for their high school credits in order that they might take these courses. One of these students would have been able to obtain enough credits to have finished his high school work this winter.

There were fifty five correspondence courses going this month. Twenty two of these courses were from the Oregon State Library at Salem and the remainder were from the W. P. A. at Boise, Idaho. The Salem Library outlines almost any course that the student desires and sends him books on the subject. Such courses as varied as barbering, metal welding, and Psychology were taken. I am quite sure that there would have been an increase in the enrollment for these courses if the camp had known that the enrollees were to remain here during the winter.

There was an increase in reading this month over last month. Almost all the enrollees were reading books, magazines and papers this month. We have been borrowing books from the Burns Library and also many from the State Library at Salem. At the end of the month when the students knew that they would not be able to complete their courses because they were going home they resorted to reading and left the classes. The number of individuals who read was also increased because the days were becoming shorter and less time could be taken for outside games.

Plans for a better educational office, a more efficient reading room, and class rooms were planned for this month. These plans included a very good tool room equipped with tools. Plans were also made for a museum. We have in camp several good carpenters capable of instructing the enrollees in carpenter craft work. Some of the enrollees are interested in making furniture, others in making buildings or bridges, while some are interested in making models of flying machines and model ships. Craft classes in Blacksmithing have been contemplated. We are sure that we would have had much better class rooms and equipment in the near future.

During the month of September we had several educational trips to interesting places and happenings near by. A trip was taken to the roundup at Lake View, Oregon where the enrollees learned much about the handling of stock on the range and the skill in handling stock by the cattle man. A trip was then taken, the next week end, to Malheur Cave. This cave is a large cave one mile in length. Although it is the opinion of some that the cave was made by an under ground stream it looks very much as though it was formed by hot lava flowing out from under lava that had cooled. Both of these ideas were brought to the enrollees' attentions. On this same trip the enrollees were brought back to camp by way of the Lava Beds where they were instructed on the outflows of lava. Another educational trip was made to the Wetzel Ranch where the enrollees learned much about how cattle are handled on the range and why they are so handled.

Recreational trips that had less educational value were made to the carnival at Burns, and the base ball team went to Boise, Idaho, where they beat the champions in that end of the district.

We had the same number of teachers in camp this month as last month and in addition the Principal of the Burns High School outlined courses and provided examinations for the camp high school classes. The County Superintendent of Harney County furnished outlines for the eight grade classes in the camp.

Plans were made to improve out moving picture program. More free educational pictures were obtained from the government. Money was being saved from camp funds for a talking movie machine and also a camp radio. Many of the enrollees have their own personal radios at the present time; however, it was thought that a more controlled program for the benefit of the entire camp could be put on over a camp owned radio. Both educational programs and entertainments by radio were planned.

We are sorry to report that this camp is disbanding at this time. We are sorry because we would have liked to finish the educational program which we had started. We wish that these enrollees could have remained, together with the present teachers. I do not believe that there are any camps that show the good will cooperation and comradeship that has been shown in this camp. I am sure that the Educational Department would have enjoyed working with the enrollees this winter.

George C. Space
Educational Advisor

CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

SAFETY MEETINGS

September 1936

Weekly safety council meetings of Army and Biological Personnel were held during September. Each council meeting was followed by a general safety meeting attended by the entire camp.

At the safety council meetings a rotation system is used in which each councilman takes a turn at presiding as chairman of a meeting. A discussion period provides each council member a chance to air his views regarding promotion of safety for men and equipment in camp, on work projects and at all other times. The council strives to cooperate in avoidance of sickness, injury, fire destruction or any unsound condition or combination of conditions which might lead to accidents.

At the council and general safety meetings this month, things discussed and acted on included providing goggles for men doing work hazardous to the eyes, the proper loading of lumber on trucks, erection of warning traffic signs in the Buena Vista area, warning enrollees against riding on the Fresno scraper, a lecture on personal and dental hygiene, the need for caution concerning travel on the troop train, the avoidance of contact of enrollees with immoral women and contraction of venereal disease, and careful avoidance on the part of enrollees of areas dangerous by reason of the presence of deer hunters.

Rear view Camp Buena Vista looking toward the North



Camp Buena Vista looking toward the West



CAMP BUENA VISTA BF-3

OREGON

RECREATION

September 1936

Over September fifth sixth, and seventh, Labor Day weekend, those enrollees who cared to go to the Lakeview annual rodeo were transported by truck, where the rodeo was much enjoyed.

Synchronous with the Lakeview trip our baseball team journeyed to Ontario and to Boise, Idaho, where the two leading teams of the Boise District Tournament were played, and beaten, in close score games.

A trip was made September twelfth for all the boys who cared to visit Malheur Cave. The cave was explored for a distance of perhaps one half mile, where an underground river bars further progress except by a boat, which is unnavigable due to a leaky bottom. It is said that strange fish are sometimes found floating on this body of underground water in a burst condition due to change of pressure from great to shallow water depth, though no such phenomenon was observed by the boys on this trip.

Two recreation trucks loaded with enrollees visited Wetzel' ranch September nineteenth where the boys were able to witness the branding of calves and castration of bull calves.

The cattle were driven into a corral and all branded stock was driven from the corral, leaving unbranded calves of varying ages.

The calf to be branded was lassoed by each of two mounted men and thrown from its feet either by the mounts jerking the calf off its feet with the lassoes, or, if this failed, the calf was tackled and thrown by a cowboy, or two CCC boys. The calf was then stretched between two mounts, one lasso around the neck or front feet and the other lasso around the rear feet. After being stretched the calf was set upon by the cowboy, who castrated the calf if it was a bull, with a sharp jackknife. The cowboy notched the ears of each calf and cut a patch of hide off the shoulder of each calf. At the cowboy's beckon one of the CC boys would take the branding iron from the fire to the cowboy, who would brand each calf until the brand was permanently seared on near the hip.

After watching this process some of the boys were heard to remark that they were glad they were not calves. The cowboy who was branding rode several calves around the corral to provide amusement for the onlooking company members. He also threw calves without the aid of a lasso.

Near the close of the afternoon when most of the day's work had been completed by the cowboys, the CCC boys were allowed a try at riding horses, roping, throwing calves and branding.

Calf throwing was rather difficult at first for the boys but when one calf was tackled by eight aspiring cowboys, the calf usually went down.

Aside from these trips, camp recreations included picture shows, pool, tennis, baseball practice, exercise on the horizontal bar, hunting Indian arrow heads and hunting jackrabbits, which are numerous in this area, with small bore rifles.

Branding a calf at the Wetzel Ranch



Castrating a bull calf in the branding pen

